

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter that Applicant regards as the invention.

Reconsideration of the subject patent application in view of the present remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 14-20, 23-24 and 26 are amended.

New claims 27 and 28 are added.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, because there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation “the plurality of connecting plates.” Claim 26 has been amended to be dependent from claim 25 which has an antecedent basis for the limitation “the plurality of connecting plates.” Thus, the rejection as it applied to claim 26 is moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claims 14-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (e) as being anticipated by Kauhaniemi et al. (US Patent pub. No.: 2004/0266496 A1; hereinafter “Kauhaniemi”).

Regarding claims 14 and 15, Kauhaniemi does not disclose that the bendable member has an arc shape in sectional view perpendicular to a connecting direction thereof. The flexible

shutter structure 1 disclosed in Kauhaniemi, which corresponds to the bendable member of the present invention, appears to have a rectangular shape in sectional view perpendicular to a connecting direction thereof, as shown in Figure 14 of Kauhaniemi. There is no disclosure in Kauhaniemi that the shutter structure 1 has an arc shape in sectional view perpendicular to a connecting direction thereof. Therefore, since every limitation of claims 14 and 15 is not taught by the reference, claims 14 and 15 are not fully anticipated by Kauhaniemi. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection as it applies to claims 14 and 15 is respectfully requested.

Claims 16-19 which are dependent from either claim 14 or claim 15 should also be allowable for at least the same reason. In addition, regarding claims 16 and 17, Kauhaniemi does not disclose that the bendable member has a longitudinal concave portion oriented in a direction parallel to a direction in which the two housing portions are folded. The Office Action states that Figure 6 of Kauhaniemi discloses the concave portion of claims 16 and 17. However, the concave portion shown in Figure 6 of Kauhaniemi is not oriented in a direction parallel to a direction in which the two housing portions are folded, but oriented in a direction perpendicular to a direction in which the two housing portions are folded.

Claim 21 which includes all of the limitations of claim 14 should also be allowable for at least the same reason.

Regarding claim 20, Kauhaniemi does not disclose that the bendable member has a curved shape in sectional view perpendicular to a connecting direction thereof. The flexible shutter structure 1 disclosed in Kauhaniemi, which corresponds to the bendable member of the present invention, appears to have a rectangular shape in sectional view perpendicular to a

connecting direction thereof, as shown in Figure 14 of Kauhaniemi. There is no disclosure in Kauhaniemi that the shutter structure 1 has a curved shape in sectional view perpendicular to a connecting direction thereof. Therefore, since every limitation of claim 20 is not taught by the reference, claim 20 is not fully anticipated by Kauhaniemi. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection as it applies to claim 20 is respectfully requested.

Claims 22-24 which are dependent from claim 20 should also be allowable for at least the same reason.

Regarding claim 25, Kauhaniemi does not disclose that each of a plurality of connecting plates has a curved portion that is curved on an axis parallel to a connecting direction thereof. The Office Action states that the hinge structure 13 in Figures 5 and 6 of Kauhaniemi has the curved portion of the claim 25 invention. However, as shown in Figures 5 and 6 of Kauhaniemi, the hinge structure 13 is not curved on an axis parallel to a connecting direction thereof; but is curved on an axis perpendicular to a connecting direction thereof. Therefore, since every limitation of claim 25 is not taught by the reference, claim 25 is not fully anticipated by Kauhaniemi. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection as it applies to claim 25 is respectfully requested.

Claim 26 which is dependent from claim 25 should also be allowable for at least the same reason.

In consideration of the foregoing analysis, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the examiner is invited to

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initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. NGB-40271.

Respectfully submitted,

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